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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

AMERICAN HEALTH CONNECTION,
INC., a Nevada corporation,

Plaintiff,

v.

PULMONARY ASSOCIATES OF
RICHMOND, INC., a Virginia
corporation, and DOES 1 through 25,
inclusive,

Defendant(s).

Case No. 2:22-cv-04379-~~GW~~-AS

**STIPULATED PROTECTIVE
ORDER**

FAC Filed: 05/20/2022
Trial Date: TBD

1 1. A. PURPOSES AND LIMITATIONS

2 Discovery in this action is likely to involve production of confidential,
3 proprietary, or private information for which special protection from public disclosure
4 and from use for any purpose other than prosecuting this litigation may be warranted.
5 Accordingly, the parties hereby stipulate to and petition the Court to enter the
6 following Stipulated Protective Order. The parties acknowledge that this Order does
7 not confer blanket protections on all disclosures or responses to discovery and that the
8 protection it affords from public disclosure and use extends only to the limited
9 information or items that are entitled to confidential treatment under the applicable
10 legal principles. The parties further acknowledge, as set forth in Section 12.3, below,
11 that this Stipulated Protective Order does not entitle them to file confidential
12 information under seal; Civil Local Rule 79-5 sets forth the procedures that must be
13 followed and the standards that will be applied when a party seeks permission from
14 the court to file material under seal.

15 B. GOOD CAUSE STATEMENT

16 This action is likely to involve trade secrets, customer and pricing information
17 lists and other valuable research, development, commercial, financial, technical
18 and/or proprietary information for which special protection from public disclosure
19 and from use for any purpose other than prosecution of this action is warranted. Such
20 confidential and proprietary materials and information consist of, among other things,
21 confidential business or financial information, information regarding confidential
22 business practices, or other confidential research, development, or commercial
23 information (including information implicating privacy rights of third parties),
24 information otherwise generally unavailable to the public, or which may be privileged
25 or otherwise protected from disclosure under state or federal statutes, court rules, case
26 decisions, or common law. Accordingly, to expedite the flow of information, to
27 facilitate the prompt resolution of disputes over confidentiality of discovery materials,
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1 to adequately protect information the parties are entitled to keep confidential, to
2 ensure that the parties are permitted reasonable necessary uses of such material in
3 preparation for and in the conduct of trial, to address their handling at the end of the
4 litigation, and serve the ends of justice, a protective order for such information is
5 justified in this matter. It is the intent of the parties that information will not be
6 designated as confidential for tactical reasons and that nothing be so designated
7 without a good faith belief that it has been maintained in a confidential, non-public
8 manner, and there is good cause why it should not be part of the public record of this
9 case.

10 2. DEFINITIONS

11 2.1 Action: this pending federal lawsuit.

12 2.2 Challenging Party: a Party or Non-Party that challenges the designation
13 of information or items under this Order.

14 2.3 “CONFIDENTIAL” Information or Items: information (regardless of
15 how it is generated, stored or maintained) or tangible things that qualify for protection
16 under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c), and as specified above in the Good
17 Cause Statement.

18 2.4 Counsel: Outside Counsel of Record and House Counsel (as well as their
19 support staff).

20 2.5 Designating Party: a Party or Non-Party that designates information or
21 items that it produces in disclosures or in responses to discovery as
22 “CONFIDENTIAL.”

23 2.6 Disclosure or Discovery Material: all items or information, regardless of
24 the medium or manner in which it is generated, stored, or maintained (including,
25 among other things, testimony, transcripts, and tangible things), that are produced or
26 generated in disclosures or responses to discovery in this matter.

27 2.7 Expert: a person with specialized knowledge or experience in a matter
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1 pertinent to the litigation who has been retained by a Party or its counsel to serve as
2 an expert witness or as a consultant in this Action.

3 2.8 House Counsel: attorneys who are employees of a party to this Action.
4 House Counsel does not include Outside Counsel of Record or any other outside
5 counsel.

6 2.9 Non-Party: any natural person, partnership, corporation, association, or
7 other legal entity not named as a Party to this action.

8 2.10 Outside Counsel of Record: attorneys who are not employees of a party
9 to this Action but are retained to represent or advise a party to this Action and have
10 appeared in this Action on behalf of that party or are affiliated with a law firm which
11 has appeared on behalf of that party, and includes support staff.

12 2.11 Party: any party to this Action, including all of its officers, directors,
13 employees, consultants, retained experts, and Outside Counsel of Record (and their
14 support staffs).

15 2.12 Producing Party: a Party or Non-Party that produces Disclosure or
16 Discovery Material in this Action.

17 2.13 Professional Vendors: persons or entities that provide litigation support
18 services (e.g., photocopying, videotaping, translating, preparing exhibits or
19 demonstrations, and organizing, storing, or retrieving data in any form or medium)
20 and their employees and subcontractors.

21 2.14 Protected Material: any Disclosure or Discovery Material that is
22 designated as “CONFIDENTIAL.”

23 2.15 Receiving Party: a Party that receives Disclosure or Discovery Material
24 from a Producing Party.

25 3. SCOPE

26 The protections conferred by this Stipulation and Order cover not only
27 Protected Material (as defined above), but also (1) any information copied or
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1 extracted from Protected Material; (2) all copies, excerpts, summaries, or
2 compilations of Protected Material; and (3) any testimony, conversations, or
3 presentations by Parties or their Counsel that might reveal Protected Material.

4 Any use of Protected Material at trial shall be governed by the orders of the
5 trial judge. This Order does not govern the use of Protected Material at trial.

6 4. DURATION

7 Even after final disposition of this litigation, the confidentiality obligations
8 imposed by this Order shall remain in effect until a Designating Party agrees
9 otherwise in writing or a court order otherwise directs. Final disposition shall be
10 deemed to be the later of (1) dismissal of all claims and defenses in this Action, with
11 or without prejudice; and (2) final judgment herein after the completion and
12 exhaustion of all appeals, rehearings, remands, trials, or reviews of this Action,
13 including the time limits for filing any motions or applications for extension of time
14 pursuant to applicable law.

15 5. DESIGNATING PROTECTED MATERIAL

16 5.1 Exercise of Restraint and Care in Designating Material for Protection.

17 Each Party or Non-Party that designates information or items for protection under this
18 Order must take care to limit any such designation to specific material that qualifies
19 under the appropriate standards. The Designating Party must designate for protection
20 only those parts of material, documents, items, or oral or written communications that
21 qualify so that other portions of the material, documents, items, or communications
22 for which protection is not warranted are not swept unjustifiably within the ambit of
23 this Order.

24 Mass, indiscriminate, or routinized designations are prohibited. Designations
25 that are shown to be clearly unjustified or that have been made for an improper
26 purpose (e.g., to unnecessarily encumber the case development process or to impose
27 unnecessary expenses and burdens on other parties) may expose the Designating
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1 Party to sanctions.

2 If it comes to a Designating Party's attention that information or items that it
3 designated for protection do not qualify for protection, that Designating Party must
4 promptly notify all other Parties that it is withdrawing the inapplicable designation.

5 5.2 Manner and Timing of Designations. Except as otherwise provided in
6 this Order (see, e.g., second paragraph of section 5.2(a) below), or as otherwise
7 stipulated or ordered, Disclosure or Discovery Material that qualifies for protection
8 under this Order must be clearly so designated before the material is disclosed or
9 produced.

10 Designation in conformity with this Order requires:

11 (a) for information in documentary form (e.g., paper or electronic
12 documents, but excluding transcripts of depositions or other pretrial or trial
13 proceedings), that the Producing Party affix at a minimum, the legend
14 "CONFIDENTIAL" (hereinafter "CONFIDENTIAL legend"), to each page that
15 contains protected material. If only a portion or portions of the material on a page
16 qualifies for protection, the Producing Party also must clearly identify the protected
17 portion(s) (e.g., by making appropriate markings in the margins).

18 A Party or Non-Party that makes original documents available for inspection
19 need not designate them for protection until after the inspecting Party has indicated
20 which documents it would like copied and produced. During the inspection and
21 before the designation, all of the material made available for inspection shall be
22 deemed "CONFIDENTIAL." After the inspecting Party has identified the documents
23 it wants copied and produced, the Producing Party must determine which documents,
24 or portions thereof, qualify for protection under this Order. Then, before producing
25 the specified documents, the Producing Party must affix the "CONFIDENTIAL
26 legend" to each page that contains Protected Material. If only a portion or portions of
27 the material on a page qualifies for protection, the Producing Party also must clearly
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1 identify the protected portion(s) (e.g., by making appropriate markings in the
2 margins).

3 (b) for testimony given in depositions that the Designating Party identify the
4 Disclosure or Discovery Material on the record, before the close of the deposition all
5 protected testimony.

6 (c) for information produced in some form other than documentary and for
7 any other tangible items, that the Producing Party affix in a prominent place on the
8 exterior of the container or containers in which the information is stored the legend
9 “CONFIDENTIAL.” If only a portion or portions of the information warrants
10 protection, the Producing Party, to the extent practicable, shall identify the protected
11 portion(s).

12 5.3 Inadvertent Failures to Designate. If timely corrected, an inadvertent
13 failure to designate qualified information or items does not, standing alone, waive the
14 Designating Party’s right to secure protection under this Order for such material.
15 Upon timely correction of a designation, the Receiving Party must make reasonable
16 efforts to assure that the material is treated in accordance with the provisions of this
17 Order.

18 6. CHALLENGING CONFIDENTIALITY DESIGNATIONS

19 6.1 Timing of Challenges. Any Party or Non-Party may challenge a
20 designation of confidentiality at any time that is consistent with the Court’s
21 Scheduling Order.

22 6.2 Meet and Confer. The Challenging Party shall initiate the informal
23 dispute resolution process set forth in the Court's Procedures and Schedules. see
24 <http://www.cacd.uscourts.gov/honorable-alka-sagar>

25 6.3 The burden of persuasion in any such challenge proceeding shall be on
26 the Designating Party. Frivolous challenges, and those made for an improper purpose
27 (e.g., to harass or impose unnecessary expenses and burdens on other parties) may
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1 expose the Challenging Party to sanctions. Unless the Designating Party has waived
2 or withdrawn the confidentiality designation, all parties shall continue to afford the
3 material in question the level of protection to which it is entitled under the Producing
4 Party's designation until the Court rules on the challenge.

5 7. ACCESS TO AND USE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

6 7.1 Basic Principles. A Receiving Party may use Protected Material that is
7 disclosed or produced by another Party or by a Non-Party in connection with this
8 Action only for prosecuting, defending, or attempting to settle this Action. Such
9 Protected Material may be disclosed only to the categories of persons and under the
10 conditions described in this Order. When the Action has been terminated, a Receiving
11 Party must comply with the provisions of section 13 below (FINAL DISPOSITION).

12 Protected Material must be stored and maintained by a Receiving Party at a
13 location and in a secure manner that ensures that access is limited to the persons
14 authorized under this Order.

15 7.2 Disclosure of "CONFIDENTIAL" Information or Items. Unless
16 otherwise ordered by the court or permitted in writing by the Designating Party, a
17 Receiving Party may disclose any information or item designated
18 "CONFIDENTIAL" only to:

19 (a) the Receiving Party's Outside Counsel of Record in this Action, as well
20 as employees of said Outside Counsel of Record to whom it is reasonably necessary
21 to disclose the information for this Action;

22 (b) the officers, directors, and employees (including House Counsel) of the
23 Receiving Party to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action;

24 (c) Experts (as defined in this Order) of the Receiving Party to whom
25 disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have signed the
26 "Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound" (Exhibit A);

27 (d) the court and its personnel;
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1 (e) court reporters and their staff;

2 (f) professional jury or trial consultants, mock jurors, and Professional
3 Vendors to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have
4 signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);

5 (g) the author or recipient of a document containing the information or a
6 custodian or other person who otherwise possessed or knew the information;

7 (h) during their depositions, witnesses, and attorneys for witnesses, in the
8 Action to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary provided: (1) the deposing party
9 requests that the witness sign the form attached as Exhibit A hereto; and (2) they will
10 not be permitted to keep any confidential information unless they sign the
11 “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A), unless otherwise
12 agreed by the Designating Party or ordered by the court. Pages of transcribed
13 deposition testimony or exhibits to depositions that reveal Protected Material may be
14 separately bound by the court reporter and may not be disclosed to anyone except as
15 permitted under this Stipulated Protective Order; and (i) any mediator or settlement
16 officer, and their supporting personnel, mutually agreed upon by any of the parties
17 engaged in settlement discussions.

18 8. PROTECTED MATERIAL SUBPOENAED OR ORDERED PRODUCED IN
19 OTHER LITIGATION

20 If a Party is served with a subpoena or a court order issued in other litigation
21 that compels disclosure of any information or items designated in this Action as
22 “CONFIDENTIAL,” that Party must:

23 (a) promptly notify in writing the Designating Party. Such notification shall
24 include a copy of the subpoena or court order;

25 (b) promptly notify in writing the party who caused the subpoena or order to
26 issue in the other litigation that some or all of the material covered by the subpoena or
27 order is subject to this Protective Order. Such notification shall include a copy of this
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1 Stipulated Protective Order; and

2 (c) cooperate with respect to all reasonable procedures sought to be pursued by
3 the Designating Party whose Protected Material may be affected.

4 If the Designating Party timely seeks a protective order, the Party served with
5 the subpoena or court order shall not produce any information designated in this
6 action as “CONFIDENTIAL” before a determination by the court from which the
7 subpoena or order issued, unless the Party has obtained the Designating Party’s
8 permission.

9 The Designating Party shall bear the burden and expense of seeking protection
10 in that court of its confidential material and nothing in these provisions should be
11 construed as authorizing or encouraging a Receiving Party in this Action to disobey a
12 lawful directive from another court.

13 9. A NON-PARTY’S PROTECTED MATERIAL SOUGHT TO BE PRODUCED
14 IN THIS LITIGATION

15 (a) The terms of this Order are applicable to information produced by a Non-
16 Party in this Action and designated as “CONFIDENTIAL.” Such information
17 produced by Non-Parties in connection with this litigation is protected by the
18 remedies and relief provided by this Order. Nothing in these provisions should be
19 construed as prohibiting a Non-Party from seeking additional protections.

20 (b) In the event that a Party is required, by a valid discovery request, to produce
21 a Non-Party’s confidential information in its possession, and the Party is subject to an
22 agreement with the Non-Party not to produce the Non-Party’s confidential
23 information, then the Party shall:

24 (1) promptly notify in writing the Requesting Party and the Non-Party that
25 some or all of the information requested is subject to a confidentiality agreement with
26 a Non-Party;

27 (2) promptly provide the Non-Party with a copy of the Stipulated Protective
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1 Order in this Action, the relevant discovery request(s), and a reasonably specific
2 description of the information requested; and

3 (3) make the information requested available for inspection by the Non-
4 Party, if requested.

5 (c) If the Non-Party fails to seek a protective order from this court within 14
6 days of receiving the notice and accompanying information, the Receiving Party may
7 produce the Non-Party's confidential information responsive to the discovery request.
8 If the Non-Party timely seeks a protective order, the Receiving Party shall not
9 produce any information in its possession or control that is subject to the
10 confidentiality agreement with the Non-Party before a determination by the court.
11 Absent a court order to the contrary, the Non-Party shall bear the burden and expense
12 of seeking protection in this court of its Protected Material.

13 10. UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

14 If a Receiving Party learns that, by inadvertence or otherwise, it has disclosed
15 Protected Material to any person or in any circumstance not authorized under this
16 Stipulated Protective Order, the Receiving Party must immediately (a) notify in
17 writing the Designating Party of the unauthorized disclosures, (b) use its best efforts
18 to retrieve all unauthorized copies of the Protected Material, (c) inform the person or
19 persons to whom unauthorized disclosures were made of all the terms of this Order,
20 and (d) request such person or persons to execute the "Acknowledgment and
21 Agreement to Be Bound" that is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

22 11. INADVERTENT PRODUCTION OF PRIVILEGED OR OTHERWISE
23 PROTECTED MATERIAL

24 When a Producing Party gives notice to Receiving Parties that certain
25 inadvertently produced material is subject to a claim of privilege or other protection,
26 the obligations of the Receiving Parties are those set forth in Federal Rule of Civil
27 Procedure 26(b)(5)(B). This provision is not intended to modify whatever procedure
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1 may be established in an e-discovery order that provides for production without prior
2 privilege review. Pursuant to Federal Rule of Evidence 502(d) and (e), insofar as the
3 parties reach an agreement on the effect of disclosure of a communication or
4 information covered by the attorney-client privilege or work product protection, the
5 parties may incorporate their agreement in the stipulated protective order submitted to
6 the court.

7 **12. MISCELLANEOUS**

8 12.1 Right to Further Relief. Nothing in this Order abridges the right of any
9 person to seek its modification by the Court in the future.

10 12.2 Right to Assert Other Objections. By stipulating to the entry of this
11 Protective Order no Party waives any right it otherwise would have to object to
12 disclosing or producing any information or item on any ground not addressed in this
13 Stipulated Protective Order. Similarly, no Party waives any right to object on any
14 ground to use in evidence of any of the material covered by this Protective Order.

15 12.3 Filing Protected Material. A Party that seeks to file under seal any
16 Protected Material must comply with Civil Local Rule 79-5. Protected Material may
17 only be filed under seal pursuant to a court order authorizing the sealing of the
18 specific Protected Material at issue. If a Party's request to file Protected Material
19 under seal is denied by the court, then the Receiving Party may file the information in
20 the public record unless otherwise instructed by the court.

21 **13. FINAL DISPOSITION**

22 After the final disposition of this Action, as defined in paragraph 4, within 60
23 days of a written request by the Designating Party, each Receiving Party must return
24 all Protected Material to the Producing Party or destroy such material. As used in this
25 subdivision, "all Protected Material" includes all copies, abstracts, compilations,
26 summaries, and any other format reproducing or capturing any of the Protected
27 Material. Whether the Protected Material is returned or destroyed, the Receiving
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1 Party must submit a written certification to the Producing Party (and, if not the same
2 person or entity, to the Designating Party) by the 60 day deadline that (1) identifies
3 (by category, where appropriate) all the Protected Material that was returned or
4 destroyed and (2) affirms that the Receiving Party has not retained any copies,
5 abstracts, compilations, summaries or any other format reproducing or capturing any
6 of the Protected Material. Notwithstanding this provision, Counsel are entitled to
7 retain an archival copy of all pleadings, motion papers, trial, deposition, and hearing
8 transcripts, legal memoranda, correspondence, deposition and trial exhibits, expert
9 reports, attorney work product, and consultant and expert work product, even if such
10 materials contain Protected Material. Any such archival copies that contain or
11 constitute Protected Material remain subject to this Protective Order as set forth in
12 Section 4 (DURATION).

13 14. VIOLATION

14 Any violation of this Order may be punished by any and all appropriate
15 measures including, without limitation, contempt proceedings and/or monetary
16 sanctions.

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1 IT IS SO STIPULATED, THROUGH COUNSEL OF RECORD.

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4 DATED January 12, 2023

/s/ Gregory L. Doll

5 GREGORY L. DOLL
6 DOLL AMIR & ELEY LLP

7 Attorneys for Plaintiff,
8 AMERICAN HEALTH
9 CONNECTION, INC.

10 DATED: January 11, 2023

/s/ Wendy Sugg

11 WENDY SUGG
12 SUGG LAW GROUP

13 Attorneys for Defendant,
14 PULMONARY ASSOCIATES
15 OF RICHMOND, INC.

16 FOR GOOD CAUSE SHOWN, IT IS SO ORDERED.

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19 DATED: January 13, 2023

/ s / Sagar

20 Honorable Alka Sagar

21 United States Magistrate Judge
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EXHIBIT A

ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AGREEMENT TO BE BOUND

I, _____ [print or type full name], of _____
[print or type full address], declare under penalty of perjury that I have read in its
entirety and understand the Stipulated Protective Order that was issued by the United
States District Court for the Central District of California on _____ in the case of
_____ American Health Connection, Inc. v. Pulmonary
Associates of Richmond, Inc. *Case No. 2:22-cv-04379-GW-AS*. I agree to comply
with and to be bound by all the terms of this Stipulated Protective Order and I
understand and acknowledge that failure to so comply could expose me to sanctions
and punishment in the nature of contempt. I solemnly promise that I will not disclose
in any manner any information or item that is subject to this Stipulated Protective
Order to any person or entity except in strict compliance with the provisions of this
Order. I further agree to submit to the jurisdiction of the United States District Court
for the Central District of California for the purpose of enforcing the terms of this
Stipulated Protective Order, even if such enforcement proceedings occur after
termination of this action. I hereby appoint _____ [print or type
full name] of _____ [print or type full address and telephone
number] as my California agent for service of process in connection with this action
or any proceedings related to enforcement of this Stipulated Protective Order.

Date: _____

City and State where sworn and signed: _____

Printed name: _____

Signature: _____